

ABSTRACTS

Alba Carballeira

“Rebuilding Knowledge: Princess de Ursins’ Gesamtkunstwerk for Philip the V.”

The artistic agency of the Princesse des Ursins, née Marie-Anne de la Trémoille (1642-1722) on interiors and decorative arts has been largely overlooked within the history of art and design. This chapter attempts to examine one of the most relevant works that she undertook at the Spanish court during the reign of Philip V, focusing on the period between 1701 and 1717. The introduction discusses the background of the princess and examines what made her the ideal person to act as a catalyst between France and Spain. It analyses how she transformed the dwelling by carrying out a significant decorative campaign that set the basis for a new ‘Spanish’ dynasty, whilst patronizing French artists. In this way, she exerted power and managed to assert the magnanimity of Louis XIV in Spain. This chapter specifically focuses on the study of Marie-Anne’s works for the project of the Alcázar Palace in Madrid (Spain). Unfortunately, the building discussed no longer exists today resulting in the problematic task of finding the name of Ursins in any existing archival sources, perhaps a reason why she has remained overlooked until now. This research proves that Ursins was in charge of the remodeling works, and for the first time, it demonstrates her artistic agency as an ambassador for French trends at the court of Louis XIV in Philip V’s Spain.

Rebecca Shields

“Frances Stewart, the Duchess of Lennox and Richmond, and Richmond House.”

How did the act of building contribute to the fashioning of identity and status for aristocratic women in early modern Britain? This chapter presents evidence of the architectural ambitions of Frances Stewart, Duchess of Lennox and Richmond, whose husband, Ludovick Stewart, was a first cousin and Lord Steward to James I. In 1622, the couple purchased two adjacent London mansions with the aim of combining them into a palatial residence known as Richmond House. Documents show that Frances oversaw the renovations, particularly the redesign of the garden, which was one of the largest in London. Classical flourishes by Inigo Jones, the king’s architect, updated the preexisting Elizabethan buildings. The sudden death of the duke in 1624 derailed the project, and Richmond House was never completed. Due to its brief life and its unfinished state, neither Richmond House nor Frances Stewart has been included in the history of British architecture. Frances Stewart was born into a minor branch of the powerful Howard family, and over the course of two decades, she rose from a merchant’s wife to a Duchess. Following the death of Queen Anne of Denmark in 1619, she was the highest-ranking woman in England. The scale, location, and style of Richmond House signaled royal presence, which was important for the newly established Stewart dynasty.

For Frances, it cemented her status as an apt builder and a royal and also represented the fusion of two of England’s most powerful families. This study of Richmond House and the matronage of Frances Stewart is heavily indebted to sociological studies of aesthetics and status, particularly Tressie McMillan Cottom’s work on race and beauty. This chapter adopts the sociological framework of aesthetic choice as status signaling and applies it to the complex social and political maneuvering of women at the Stewart court.

Consuelo Lollobrigida

“The Influence of Borromini in Bricci’s Architectural Apprenticeship and Background.”

This contribution launches a new perspective on Plautilla Bricci’s architectural skills, through a new reading of her works (Casa Grande Benedetti, Villa Benedetti, Cappella di San Luigi). It starts from the new hypothesis which sees the young Plautilla (20 years younger than Francesco) being around Borromini’s studio and, most likely, helping the master in the Oratorio, Sant’Ivo and the Lateran.

The examination of Cardinal Francesco Barberini’s patronage is the key figure, both for Borromini and Bricci. As a conclusion, another compelling hypothesis emerges: Plautilla paints her own portrait within at least three of her works, as a keen message of self-confidence and awareness.

Laura Hindelang

“Female Architectural Agency Pre-1900: Conceptualizing Cross-Cultural Perspectives.”

The paper focuses on Marianne Princess of Prussia (1810—1883) and her active involvement in the commission, design, and construction of Castle Camenz in Silesia (at the time Prussia, today Poland). Marianne, a Princess of Orange-Nassau by birth, intended Castle Camenz as the countryside residence for the young family she was building with Prince Albert of Prussia; in 1837 she approached the famed German architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781—1841) with the idea. Although construction started almost immediately, the building process lasted until 1873. Marianne pursued the project for over 35 years despite all personal turbulences such as being exiled from both Prussia and the Netherlands, and divorce. Far from being just the castle’s patron, historical correspondence and architectural drawings show that Marianne was a sharp critic of certain architectural solutions and that she had clear expectations for the quality of living the castle should provide. This paper sheds new light on Marianne’s multifaceted agency in building one of the largest castles in Silesia. On the one hand, it takes into consideration a newly discovered archive of hers to understand her architectural education and building agenda, where Camenz was just one amongst many other architectural commissions, renovations, and acquisitions in Italy, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, and Germany in her name. On the other hand, it reads these new findings against the existing historiography, on the architect Schinkel, on the castle as well as in relation to the biographical research on Marianne. The overall aim is to question perpetuating, overly simplified, and often derogatory stereotypes of the “princess-as-patron” and, instead, to propose a new visibility of the historically evident agency of women in the field of architecture of the 1800s.

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Izabela Kopania

“Dutch-British Style for Cottage Architecture: Magdalena Morska’s Aesthetic Vision of Zarzecze Village.”

In a village of Zarzecze in Austrian Galicia (now Poland), Countess Magdalena Morska née Dzieduszycka (1764–1847) created a unique palace-garden complex connected with a picturesque village of “ideal” houses for peasants working on her lands. While the palace, a classicizing pile built between the years 1807–1812, was a collaborative enterprise between Morska and her husband, peasant houses constituted an undertaking of Morska’s own invention. In the years 1821–1832 Morska took an active part in designing this group of “Dutch-British” houses for peasants. The buildings, some of which still exist, are known through iconographic sources, namely a printed album entitled “The Collection of Drawings Representing the Best Buildings of Zarzecze Village” that Morska published in 1836. The village linked the concept of picturesque beauty to philanthropic ideas for improving the lives of the poor and economic demands requiring that the estate be profitable. At least three factors determined Morska’s agency as a patron cum designer, namely her personal life, the unstable political condition of Poland partitioned between Russia, Prussia, and Austria, and the idea of the estate as a “private state”, deeply rooted among the Polish nobility, which enabled her to perceive the embellishing of estate grounds as parallel to creating her own homeland. I will consider how Morska adapted the idea of ‘picturesque cottage’, derived from Western architectural traditions, at the Eastern borders of Europe as a visual language of utilitarian rural housing. Her choice of the hybrid Dutch-British style of her invention as a costume for cottages was determined in terms of aesthetics, pragmatism and ideology. I will try to understand how this amalgam of “nation-oriented” style worked as a visual idiom to communicate the social and political ideas behind the Zarzecze village.

Mariana de Moura

“Women and Construction Know-How: Critical Fabulations from Self-Produced Sites.”

Inspired by Sérgio Ferro’s attempt to write a history of architecture from the perspective of the building site, this chapter examines architectural history from an even more nuanced point of view: that of the self-produced site. Knowing that in many parts of the world women historically participated (and in many cases still participate) in the construction of their own houses, the methodological perspective of self-production allows us to write a history of women in architecture that diverts attention from the formal and spatial relations of the finished product to the social relations of its production. In this paper, a literature review will recover women’s engagement in self-produced architectural sites.

I will focus on vernacular construction, which constituted the core of housing production globally until the twentieth century and which is organized mostly for the family unit. This shift away from monumental buildings to the vernacular brings new insight into the complexity of gendered divisions of labor on the construction site. Moreover, my review of vernacular sites creates a framework from which to understand a case study of a specific socio-spatial context: the Brazilian maroon community, Mata dos Crioulos, where construction endeavors are mostly done by women. Utilizing the oral histories of residents and other means of analysis, I hope to apply a feminist-decolonial approach to clarify two common misconceptions in the history of architecture: one that assumes construction to be the exclusive realm of men and another that defines the discipline as a corpus of formal and specialized practice. Ultimately my objective is to contextualize women’s inclusion and exclusion from building as part of a wider sociological process, that of spatial transformation led by human work, beyond the traditional building site.

Barry Stiefel

“Enslaved African Women Brickmakers in Early America.”

Through the lens of material culture, this chapter will use an African enslaved brick and shell as a starting point for an exploration of enslaved women as manual laborers in the building trades. While we don’t know who specifically made this brick, it was common practice in Charleston and other parts of Early America for enslaved brickmakers to be women and children. The brick’s narrowness of the fingerprint indentations supports this practice. This seashell was sacred and had intentionally been placed within the brick. The shell species is Lightning Whelk (*Busycon sinistrum*), which was similar to a conch, a shell that was commonly used by African women for rituals and ornamentation. Based on the brick’s typology, it was made at the end of the Early Modern period (c.1800) by an enslaved African. No others like it (with a seashell in the middle) have ever been found, making it exceedingly rare. Historic bricks of this age are common in Charleston, and they don’t fail due to hidden seashells. After the brick was made, it was not used in any load-bearing way within a structure because it would have broken earlier in its existence. Centuries later, a brick collector found it and unknowingly added it to their inventory to be used in the repair of historic buildings, where my colleague unexpectedly encountered it. This brick can tell us about the lives and experiences of enslaved brickmakers from a time when it was illegal for them to be literate. This brick can serve as a conversation piece for generating new narratives on Early Modern trades and enslaved women who were trapped within this world.

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Brickmaking and masonry will be the emphasis of the paper, but it will also explore carpentry and the circumstances of the enslaved Peggy in Charleston's construction business in 1828.

Elizabeth Biggs and Kirsty Wright
“Women Shaping the Palace of Westminster, c.1290-1700.”

The architectural history of the palace of Westminster has largely been written as the achievements of male masons and architects on specific major projects such as the fourteenth-century hammerbeam roof of Westminster Hall. In this paper, we explore how women shaped the public appearance of the collection of buildings that made up the Palace of Westminster before the fire in 1834 that necessitated Charles Barry's rebuilding. The palace on the eve of the fire was not conventionally architecturally significant. However, as a significant landmark and major public building, its built form is of considerable interest. Adaptation and re-use of older buildings were key to the palace's architectural appearance and significance across this period. Underneath late eighteenth-century façades lay medieval buildings, shaped by centuries of adaptation to meet new needs as the palace changed from a medieval royal home to the home of Parliament and the Law Courts. These buildings were consistently a home for some who worked for the major public institutions- and their families. Women worked alongside men within this social world to maintain the buildings used by the Commons, the Lords, and the courts. Women shaped their own dwellings within the palace, and they were among those who supplied materials to the ever-ongoing works on the palace. Additionally, the wealth of surviving documentation allows us to think more broadly about the ways in which women were able to influence pre-modern architecture. It also allows us to reconsider the relationship between architecture and time, as Westminster was a continuously occupied site throughout this period, with regular alterations and developments. By taking a slightly different view both of women's role in architecture and of the Palace of Westminster itself, we can write women back into the story of the architectural creation of England and then Britain's political hub before the mid-nineteenth century.

Nicoletta Marconi
“Unsuspected Presences: Women Workers on 16th to 18th-Century Roman Building Sites.”

The presence of women in Roman and Latium building sites in the premodern age was not episodic. Yet, for a long time, preconceptions about gender led most to believe that activities related to the construction of architecture were the exclusive prerogative of men.

The historical truth is, construction sites have welcomed many female workers, employed in different, even heavy-lifting, roles. They deserve redemption from a persistent prejudice, which has erased their memory. This paper will illuminate my research in collaboration with the Archives of the Fabbrica of St. Peter's in the Vatican on papal-sponsored building projects, a setting in which one might never have imagined finding women permanently employed. As documented in the Fabbrica's registers relating to the production and trade of bricks and other similar activities in the Papal States, the tasks performed by women carters, transporters, and bricklayers were, surprisingly, not only remunerated with equal pay compared to men, but the women were renowned for their strength and determination. The same equality is found in the relations between the Fabbrica of St. Peter's and the suppliers of building materials, among whom the 'carter women' stood out for their entrepreneurial skills. If evidence of the presence of women bricklayers in St. Peter's building site is rare, it is instead widely documented in other building sites of the 17th century, from Abruzzo to the noble fiefdoms of Lazio. Here, the work of several female bricklayers is documented up until the 18th century. The building trade in the premodern era can therefore be reconfigured as a site where custom and necessity concurred to emancipate the female condition, overcoming the historical prejudice of the exclusion of certain jobs to women. This essay reconstructs the activities and roles of these strong-willed women in order to bring to light their history, memory, and professional dignity, now forgotten.

Gül Kale
“Women as Shapers of Spatial Practices in Ottoman Istanbul.”

The role of women in shaping spatial practices in the premodern Ottoman world is still an understudied area. Whereas the architectural patronage of women in courtly circles and women's contributions as laborers have been widely examined, women's interventions to shape spatial practices as regular residents, homeowners, or founders of small-scale charitable institutions in Istanbul have not been sufficiently explored. Although premodern court records excluded detailed accounts of women's agency, recent studies challenged the observations of foreign travelers to the empire, who claimed that women had no visibility, agency, or presence in society. In addition to the mosque and the bathhouse, the court was another public realm that women frequented for various reasons.

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Thus, when read closely, these records can shed light on how women tried to adjust the layouts of buildings, —such as building or demolishing wooden fences on walls or windows— or decided about their properties' (ranging from a store to a lodge) specific uses by tenants both during and after their lifetime. Such active involvement in decision-making processes at the court regarding the function of places underscores women's conscious attempts to be effective agents regarding the ethical uses of architecture with a concern for the common good in the city sphere. In this paper, I will explore the means by which women controlled the use of the built environment and their efforts to protect their spatial and social rights. I will particularly focus on what can be deduced from court records in regard to women's indirect support for learning, an area that has often excluded women's participation and patronage. Whereas the patronage of women to support learning through commissioning books is less visible, they participated in this tradition by donating their houses for the use of scholars who needed a dwelling, which would become workspaces, or sites of knowledge production simultaneously.

Julie Beckers

“Rebuilding for Observance: Architectural changes to Santa Maria di Monteluce in Perugia post Reform, c. 1448-1485.”

In 1448, the wealthy female Franciscan convent of Santa Maria di Monteluce in Perugia, was reformed by the nuns of Santa Lucia in Foligno. The change brought forward by the 15th-century Observant reform movement made a lasting impression, not only on the community of enclosed women living in the convent but also on the architecture of their House. The aims of reform were mainly targeted at a return to the original rule of the founder. Reform was deemed necessary when the rules had been disregarded. Most often the abuse that came to light after a visitation mentioned disregarding the regulations pertaining to enclosure. This forced enclosure asked for a very specific architecture. The architecture of the convent should reflect buildings that protected the spiritual currency carried by virginal nuns inside, and at the same time keep worldly sins and temptations out of the convent. High walls, grilles, grates, and wheels were part of the vocabulary of an enclosed community, rigorously checked by clerical visitations. Because of the reform of 1448, a chronicle was initiated by the women at Monteluce. Written by the nuns themselves, from one scribe to the other, the chronicle allows researchers to hear the voices of women otherwise silenced. The chronicle offers, among many things, an overview of building works done at the convent.

These works were direct consequences and demands of the 1448 reform and can therefore be linked to an effort to reinstate Monteluce as the exemplary community of Poor Clares it had been since its foundation in 1218. I propose to write about these architectural changes to the built environment at Monteluce between the period 1448 and 1525.

Sol Pérez Martínez

“Nuns Reporting the City: Convents, Urban Life, and Female Experiences of 1700s Chile.”

Parallel to the Spanish military colonization of Chile during the 16th century, the arrival of the catholic religious orders from Spain instituted a cultural colonization of the region. Only 30 years after the foundation of Santiago City in 1541, three priest orders – Mercedarians, Dominicans, and Franciscans – were doing missionary work in the newly conquered territories. At the end of the century, they were joined by Augustans and Jesuits – the latter becoming a popular and influential group controlling vast amounts of land and capital during colonial times. The central purpose of these orders was to educate and propagate the Christian faith and culture within Spanish and indigenous groups, helping advance the colonization project in challenging areas of the new colony. As part of their missionary project, priests founded and developed schools, monasteries, and female-only convents throughout the Chilean territory. In this context, nuns became the first female writers and urban chroniclers of the south corner of the Spanish empire. In order to understand female experiences of architecture and the built environment during colonial times in Chile, this paper examines the writings of Chilean nuns who lived during the 17th and 18th centuries. It focuses on the work of Sor Úrsula Suarez (1666-1749), who wrote her autobiography within the convent in the central square of Santiago, Sor Josefa Peña y Lillo (1739-1823), who used the epistolary genre to recount her experience in the Dominican monastery, and Sor Tadea de San Joaquín (1755-1827), who wrote a poem about the flooding of Santiago. While most writings by nuns were discarded, lost in transit or destroyed by the authors themselves, the writings of San Joaquín, Suarez, and Peña y Lillo were protected by priests, who understood their literary value and were rediscovered during the last decades of the 20th century by literature scholars and historians.

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Elena Rieger

“Urban Living: Emilie von Berlepsch and the Late Eighteenth-Century City.”

In the late 18th century, the aristocratic writer Emilie von Berlepsch (1755-1830) observed the connection between the built environment and the mind. Drawing from her personal experiences, she highlighted the intertwining between architecture and society. Her observations can help us understand the community apparatus and its social norms and how they affected the residents of 18th-century towns in Germany. Berlepsch, born as Emilie von Opperly partly grew up in Weimar, a city she experienced as intellectually and mentally stimulating. After her marriage at the age of 16, she was forced to relocate from Weimar to the small town Ratzeburg. Berlepsch writes about these for her unsettling experiences in her first book, published in 1787, the same year of her divorce. She describes this experience of displacement and her adaptation to her new life and depicts the surrounding areas from her new perspective. Based on her experiences, she argues that the built environment should not be categorized by geographical scale, but rather measured by philosophical and economic standards that stimulate the mind. Architecture, art and culture, intellectual stimuli, and the diversity of the people and education are the indicators that determine whether a place should be classified as a small town or a big city. Emilie von Berlepsch drew attention to the connection between the built environment and the mind and how the social structures within the city or the small town affect the individual. This paper will examine Berlepsch's experiences on urban living in order to offer a new perspective, to be more precise, a woman's perspective, on the living realities of the people in cities and towns of 18th-century Germany. I will argue, that for Berlepsch education and intellectual stimuli are the most important parameters for urban space and strongly inform her urban theory.

Christina Contandriopoulos and Étienne Morasse-Choquette

“Woman Writing on the Art and Architecture in Eighteenth-Century Paris.”

My presentation explores the space of architectural criticism in late 18th-century Paris, with a specific focus on contributions made by women. While this period is well-documented in the literature, the unique role of women in shaping this discourse has largely gone unnoticed. The chapter aims to address three key objectives: to bridge the gap in historiography regarding women's contributions to architectural discourse, to analyze the literary qualities of selected texts, and to shed light on the historical construction of gender. The primary subjects of analysis are

Catherine Michèle de Maisonrouge, Stéphanie de Genlis, and Caroline Wuiet. Three women writers from privileged backgrounds who had access to education and moved in elite social circles. Their writings provide insightful descriptions of some key architectural monuments, including the Royal Chapel of the Invalides, the Louvre's Salon Carré, and the Theatre Richelieu in Paris. Their texts prompt several important questions: How do they contribute to the historical understanding of specific buildings? What lessons can be drawn from them, and how can their relevance in contemporary discourse be assessed? Women's architectural writings in 18th-century France differed from mainstream academic discourse in tone and style. They were characterized by brevity, lightness, personal anecdotes, and often humor, focusing on sensory experiences and emotions. These women were acutely aware of their unique perspective and unapologetically stated, “I speak as a woman,” making it clear that their viewpoint was distinct from that of male authors. This approach aligns with what we now describe as “standpoint theory.” Being on the fringes of architectural criticism allowed them to adopt a more critical and objective view of social spaces. They discussed social issues and gender roles, leveraging architecture as a potent medium to express their voices within the public sphere.

Anne Hultzsich

“Conversations at the Tea Table: Eliza Haywood and the Sites of Criticism.”

Eliza Haywood (c.1693-1756) appears as an ambiguous figure; pioneering novelist, playwright, actress, political propagandist, and journalist, she has been obscured by both contemporaries and historians. The Tea-Table (1725) was her first periodical, followed by The Parrot (1728, 1746) and The Female Spectator (1744-46), the first British journal for women written by a woman. Comprising a large variety of topics, from literary criticism and science to social analysis and commentary on the emerging middle classes, her journals show a unique female angle on the growing periodical cultures of the 18th century. Haywood constructs conversations between figures from both sexes; her lead characters, however, were women. She situates female practices of verbal exchange on the printed page, from parrot-like gossiping to learned conversation taking place while consuming the then relatively new beverage, tea, mostly favored by privileged women. What role, then, did the site of the tea-table play in this process? What relationship do the objects and spaces involved – from table and chairs to room and printed page – maintain to the practices of conversations and criticism, particularly

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This paper situates the tea-table – placed variably in the drawing room, the dressing room, the library, or other spaces oscillating between intimacy and sociability – as a site in which the practice of criticism emerged. I argue that the female-managed sites of tea-table and drawing room as well as the female practice of visiting can help to expand the histories of architectural criticism and print cultures, including the architectural magazine emerging in the 19th century. Considering Haywood’s position at the margins of polite society, trespassing as actress, novelist, or journalist, this paper discusses questions of class and canonicity, but remains close to distinct objects and spaces, imagined and real.

María Elena Díez Jorge
“The Prestige of Women through Architecture in Sixteenth-Century Spain.”

The prestige of women in the public sphere has been expressed in many ways throughout history. Prestige has traditionally been associated with men and their public projection, whereas female prestige has not been considered as a subject of study. However, many of the well-known – and wrongly termed – famous women, as well as many other less-known women from towns and cities, gained prestige and social recognition thanks to their public actions, which included the sponsorship of architectural projects. In this study, I analyzed the prestige of women, understood as the social enhancement, esteem, renown, influence, and authority attained by certain women through architecture. I focus on the prestige achieved by women in the public sphere in two aspects. First, as a result of their public agency as patrons and sponsors of architecture. To this end, I bring to light documented evidence of women acting as commissioners of architectural works in various cities, which reveals that the sponsorship of public buildings and construction projects was not exclusively a male activity but was also undertaken by women, granting them the ensuing social recognition. Among other typologies, funerary spaces were a useful instrument for achieving this prestige through architecture, given that women managed to perpetuate their lineage and their memory with them. However, this was also achieved through buildings and construction projects that contributed to the common good, such as the creation of hospitals, hospices, and even convents that had an impact on the economic activity of specific parts of cities. Second, this recognition was also achieved by women who participated directly in on-site work in certain important building projects, as revealed in the archival documentation both through building accounts and by the presence of women in certain trades.

Ceren Göğüş
“Self-Representation of Ottoman Women through Public Projects.”

The visibility of women in the history of the Muslim world has always been a contested topic. Considering the limitations imposed on women in everyday life, it was long assumed that they were completely silent and invisible in public space. However, studies in recent years show this to be incorrect. Self-representation of prolific people in public space was quite different in Muslim countries than in their Western counterparts for a long time. While a ruler could build a monument to commemorate themselves in Europe, the idea of a monument as a signifier for an individual was nonexistent and even unacceptable in Ottoman Empire. Instead, building hospitals, schools, or fountains under one’s name to contribute to people’s everyday life was common practice. From the start of the Empire, this opportunity for creation was also open to women as benefactors of charitable constructions. Being the benefactor and namesake of buildings in the center of everyday life, these women legitimized their families’ sovereignty. This is conceptually not that different from Riegl’s intentional monuments, but even an intentional monument can only become what it was conceived to be through its place in the lives of the people. It needs to belong and to be experienced. That is why in the analysis of monuments, in addition to their design, their chosen site and the ritualistic movement around them play a significant role. This study aims to open a new framework of analysis for the philanthropic constructions of Ottoman women by approaching them as monuments built in the name of a female ruler or ruling elite. To do this I will examine their placement, their impact on the public, and how they shaped the space and the everyday routine of the people around them.

Jaroslaw Pietrzak
“Polish abbess as restorers of churches and monasteries in the Eighteenth Century in the light of monastery chronicles.”

Queen Maria Kazimiera d’Arquien Sobieska, belonged to one of the most influential figures among Polish queens. This paper will focus on her position in the legal system of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and – on the basis of this – show how the queen implemented her intentions on architecture, which came out of her projects, inspiration, and patronage. The space for her activities was a network of residences created in the capital – Warszawa (Warsaw).

To mark its influence, the Queen began construction works, which resulted in the creation of two residential premises, Marymont and Marywil, which, next to the Royal Castle and Wilanów, a private residence of the Sobieski family, created a network of royal buildings and spaces of power. In particular, I would like to show the influence of the Queen in the entire process of creating the residence, her relations with the overseers, builders, and the renowned European architect - Tylman of Gameren, and the influence of her individual aesthetic taste, which was not insignificant. Each of the residences was associated with specific activities of the Queen, among others receiving government officials, parliamentary deputies, and representatives of foreign power. The paper will establish the Queen's political undertakings over the period 1674 to 1698. Also of relevance to the Queen's political aspirations is her creation of these residences as an adaptation of French cultural patterns and thus understood by the Polish nobility as a means to introduce absolute power, so-called absolutum dominium. This postulate reconciled the values of noble democracy, among which freedom and noble equality stood out. The adaptation of French patterns were important to the Queen for breaking social barriers and animating political life and political confrontation with the reluctant nobility.

Konrad Niemira

“Architecture, Literature and Sexual Agency in Helena Radziwiłł’s Arkadia Landscape Garden.”

Shortly after the first partition of the Polish-Lithuanian state in 1772, Helena Radziwiłł (1753-1821) founded a landscape garden called Arkadia. On the outskirts of her husband's estate in Nieborów she built an artificial lake and a cascade, erected a rural pavilion, neoclassical temple, and several 'ruins', which in the years to come were joined by more and more extravagant realizations (ie. a hippodrome and an empty tent made out of glass). While it is commonplace in the scholarship to interpret Arkadia as a masonic riddle, closer attention paid to the cultural practices related to the garden, offers a different picture of its purpose as the aspiration of one female patron. By looking at the function of the garden's main pavilion and its decoration, one can observe how Radziwiłł orchestrated a space where an intimate sexual experience could co-exist with political messages. Arkadia was founded not only after the time of political turmoil but also shortly after Radziwiłł entered into an informal relationship with Otto Magnus von Stackelberg, Russian ambassador to Poland and its de facto ruler. The garden served as a scenery for their meetings and embodied amorous ties. However, Arkadia was not just a monument of a singular love affair. It was rather a carefully orchestrated temple of female sexuality.

The garden retained its amorous functions even when Radziwiłł's relationship with Stackelberg ended and retained it even when she was in her late 50s. In Poland, Radziwiłł was seen as both a powerful sorceress able to ensnare the most powerful men, and a keen female architect. What was the relationship between those two identities? Looking at how the category of the sexual agency is constantly renegotiated at the site of Arkadia will help us appreciate the role of private architecture in constructing one's public and political identity.

Sigrid de Jong

“Women as Agents of Change: Female Interventions in Parisian Architecture.”

In 1778, Marie-Jeanne Girardot de Vermeux (1736-1781), widow of the Swiss banker Georges-Tobie de Thélusson, designed together with architect Claude-Nicolas Ledoux her sumptuous hôtel Thélusson in Paris, celebrated as a singular edifice, that moved its visitors while they traversed the building. In the same year Suzanne Necker (1737-1794) founded a children's hospital, aiming to reform and reorganize the city's hygienic and social aspects. Necker, a salonnière, published her revolutionary ideas in *Mémoire sur l'établissement des hospices* (1786). Her daughter Anne-Louise-Germaine Necker (1766-1817), born in the hôtel de Hallwyll (equally designed with Ledoux), was actively engaging in her mother's salon. She opened her own, as Madame de Staël, inviting the intellectual, literary, and artistic milieu to exchange on topics of philosophy, politics and aesthetics. De Staël, author of an impressive oeuvre of novels, philosophical and political works, expressed her views on architecture and the city, but has been overlooked as a significant voice in architectural historiography. Revealing how these three women moved in the same circles and influenced each other, this paper aims to recover the diverse ways in which they employed their agency within the built environment, and their significant and intertwining roles in Parisian society, culture, and politics. Situating them within the turbulent developments of the Parisian metropolis in flux at the eve of and just after the French revolution, these women are studied as agents of change. Their engagement with architecture went beyond the aesthetics of buildings; they claimed their space by inventing luxurious living spaces to receive and to move through, by revolutionizing hospitals, or by connecting historical and political issues to their observations of the built world. The myriad ways in which these women influenced architectural thought and design prompt us to open up to new sources and voices while challenging the canon of architectural history.

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Shelley E. Roff

“Introduction: Matronage in a New Light.”

Since the mid-1990s, the burgeoning scholarship on women’s patronage of architecture has occupied center-stage as the main body of literature investigating women and the built environment before the modern era. This stage is shared with its more theoretically-minded cousin, gender studies in architecture, which has greatly expanded our understanding of the conscious and subconscious impact of gender on design. Yet within patronage studies, many facets of women’s engagement still remain in the shadows due to the paucity of archival evidence, culturally ordained silences on women’s relationship to money and the public sphere, and traditional stereotypes and distortions of truth about women, which are part of the historical record. Following the lead of Helen Hills, and more recently, Katherine McIver and Sheryl E. Reiss, scholars are continuing to experiment with new methods for tackling these issues. The sessions at this symposium offer new readings of the desires, motivations, and activities of women who were highly engaged in their own architectural commissions, or who, alternatively, provided unconventional or innovative forms of support, mentorship or guidance to the development of built form in any period before 1800. Many of the studies in this session occur in a cross-cultural or transnational setting or address networks of women who supported the building arts or engaged in commissions together. In light of this, the roundtable is designed to re-examine the assumption of what a patron is and reconceptualize women’s activities in the process of making the built environment. Can we analyze women’s patronage with an eye to redefining and renaming these women’s activities as something beyond ‘patronage’, as acts of socio-political reform or as the expressions of an unrecognized amateur designer? By turning the prism on premodern women’s patronage, can we begin to see matronage in a new light?

Margaret Woodhull

“Women and Public Buildings Around the Ancient Mediterranean: Some Thoughts on What and Why They Built.”

Imperial Rome’s monumental and civic buildings are traditionally known by the reigning emperor under whose auspices they were constructed. Less celebrated are imperial women and their buildings which appeared as Rome’s Republican era ended and Empire began. Famous among these were the great porticoes of Octavia Minor and Livia Drusilla, sister and wife respectively of Rome’s first emperor, Octavian Augustus. Indeed, from the start of the imperial era, a novel phenomenon took root across Rome’s vast expanse.

Imperial women and their non-imperial, elite counterparts joined the men’s only privilege of publica magnificentia, the monumental embellishment of the public and urban spaces that comprised the Roman Empire. Outside Rome, elite women, like the first-century CE benefactress, Eumachia, of Roman Pompeii and Plancia Magna of Asia Minor carved out civic spaces with grand structures that gave public face to female patronage and agency. What were the origins of Roman women’s monumental benefaction and how did they gain access to the politicized, male-dominated sphere of city building? What typically motivated and characterized their largesse, and what might they have hoped to achieve by their expenditures? This paper addresses these questions to explore the significance of women as patrons of public architecture, the nature of their buildings, and the role these played in their social and urban contexts. It examines several instances of women and urban monumentalization during different times and places within the Roman Empire to provide a sense of the breadth and diversity of buildings and patronesses by considering both imperial and non-imperial case studies. The paper concludes with a look forward to the role of Roman women and early Christian spaces of worship, as prologue to their central role in the construction of religious architecture in later eras.

Jyoti Pandey Sharma

“Invisible Patrons and Stewardship of the Faith:

The Begami Masjids (Mosques built by Mughal Ladies) of the Mughal Badshahi Shahar (Imperial City) Shahjanahabad.”

The agency of women as patrons of architecture in the context of the South Asian city is conspicuous by its absence from the academic discourse. Set in seventeenth-century Mughal dynasty ruled Indian subcontinent, the paper examines the contribution of Mughal Parda-nashiinii (veiled) Begams (titular address of wives and daughters of the imperial family), in shaping the city in a scenario overwhelmingly dominated by the architectural patronage of the Badshahs (Emperors). The Begams have been caricatured as being confined to the Zanaanaa (female quarters) physically and intellectually and their built-environment patronage remains understudied. The paper asserts that the Begams who were invisible from public life, were also prolific builders, patronizing a variety of buildings, notably Masjids (mosques). The paper situates the Begams’ patronage in Badshah Shahjahan’s seventeenth-century Badshahi Shahar (imperial capital) Shahjahanabad that was showcased as the epicenter of Mughal power and of Islam. A compendium of Masjids raised through imperial, sub-imperial, and non-imperial patronage bolstered Shahjahanabad’s image as a religious epicenter among contemporary Islamic geographies.

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The paper examines the constellation of Begamii Masjids – whose Parada-nashii patrons were conspicuous by their absence as worshippers – in the city and their role in advancing its image as the center of Islam. It argues that the Begams' patronage had multiple meanings including subscribing to the imperial diktat to build mosques throughout the empire; asserting their religious identity and that of the Muslim community that was demographically in a minority in the empire and subscribing to the pre-established Shahjahani mosque building architectural vocabulary to perpetuate the legitimacy of the Mughals' self-appointed role as the upholders of Islam. Despite their patrons' invisibility, the Begamii Masjids were able to hold their own. They outlived the Mughals to serve as an archetype and form an integral part of Delhi's legacy today thus attesting their relevance across time.

Alper Metin

“Women Shaping the Ottoman Capital, from Saliha to Nakşidil Sultan (1730-1817).”

The eighteenth century represented a period of unprecedented cross-cultural interaction between the Ottomans and Western Europe, thanks to numerous diplomatic, political, and commercial factors. In this period, the architects of the capital started merging their traditional architectural vocabulary with that coming from the West, creating the so-called Ottoman Baroque. In addition to decorative and architectural features, the European influence also brought a new relationship between the individual building and urban space. In fact, the fabric of the Ottoman capital was gradually transformed in response to a new desire for monumentality on the part of the patrons and the changing daily life of the users. The imperial women of the period participated in the shaping of new, representative spaces of the capital alongside with their male counterparts. Starting from the small complex that Saliha Sultan, mother of Mahmud I, built on Azapkapı shore (1732), the architectural activity of the female patrons gained an increasingly urban character. The most emblematic outcome was certainly reached at the monumental complex of the Coronation Street in Eyüp district, built between 1792 and 1796 by Mihrişah Valide Sultan, as part of a wider architectural program by the powerful queen mother of the ruler of Selim III. It was a pioneering project, defining a rectilinear axis within the tangled traditional fabric of the city where the longstanding tradition of the coronation procession of the sultans took place. In these eighteenth-century philanthropic complexes, the functional program was noteworthy as well, being based mostly on cultural and public utility buildings. These were skillfully merged into monumental architectural ensembles in an innovative urban setting.

This paper aims to analyze how the eighteenth-century complexes built by sultanas of the court promoted new architectural and urban design concepts in the Ottoman capital, between 1732 and 1796, as Istanbul became a laboratory of ideas, forms, and expertise.

Hannah Mawdsley and Eleanor Harding

“Unpicking the evidence of Elizabeth Murray's role in the expansion of Ham House.”

This paper examines the role of women in the architectural design and development of Ham House during the 17th century. Elizabeth Murray (1626-1698), Countess of Dysart from 1655 and Duchess of Lauderdale from 1672, collaborated with her second husband, John Maitland, Duke of Lauderdale, on extravagant building and furnishing campaigns (between 1672 and 1682) at her family seat, Ham House, by the Thames at Richmond. Ham was cleverly transformed from a Jacobean H-plan into a double-pile house with royal apartments. John Evelyn described the results, following a visit in 1678: 'After dinner I walked to Ham, to see the House & Garden of the Duke of Laderdaile, which is indeede inferior to few of the best Villas in Italy itselfe, The house furnishd like a greate Princes'. Evelyn was wrong to identify the Duke of Lauderdale as the owner of the house – the Duchess inherited it from her father, William Murray, along with the Dysart title. This paper will explore the ways in which Elizabeth's agency and influence on the design and build of the Ham House extension have been occluded by interpretations drawing on traditional perceptions of gender roles. We aim to disentangle Elizabeth's influence from that of her second husband, re-examining contemporary records, to build on the picture presented by the bills signed by the Duchess as part of her personal accounts (1672-81). These include payments to joiners (Henry Harlow, 'Hendrick Mainners the Dutch Joyner', 'Johan Christian Ulrich a Dutch Joyner', Thomas Gally); carvers ('ye Dutch carver'); scagliola makers (Baldassare Artima); plasterers (Henry Wells); gardeners (John Flaigmill, ye French Gardiner'); 'Mr. Remp Pottmaker', and others. The paper will explore the way that design decisions made at Ham influenced those made at Whitehall and elsewhere in Restoration Britain, and foreground Elizabeth's role as a woman shaping architecture and design.

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Mercedes Simal López “Elizabeth Farnese, Builder of the Majesty of Philip V.”

Since her marriage to Philip V in 1714, Elizabeth Farnese played a fundamental role as the sovereign's political, diplomatic, and artistic advisor throughout his reign. In the field of architecture, the queen, who demonstrated an enormous capacity for resilience, promoted numerous initiatives related to the reform and decoration of royal sites - especially the royal fortress (upon whose ashes the New Royal Palace was built in 1735) and the Buen Retiro palace in Madrid - and instilled in her children the importance of these concerns. These interventions were aimed at adapting the different residences inherited from the Austrians to the new needs of Bourbon ceremonial and etiquette, and at giving them the due magnificence. Likewise, the circumstances of his reign led Philip V to build, starting in 1720, a palace for his retirement in La Granja de San Ildefonso (Segovia), which after the death of Luis I in 1725 became a royal palace and one of the most emblematic building projects of the reign, in whose design and decoration Elizabeth Farnese actively participated, with the help of great artists such as Andrea Procaccini and Filippo Juvarra.

Priscilla Sonnier “Noble Minded Sister’: Grizelda Steevens and Dublin’s Steevens’ Hospital (1717-1733).”

On 14 August 1717, the first documented ‘meeting of the Trustees for Mrs Steevens’s Charity’ commenced at St Sepulchre’s Palace, the official residence of the Archbishop of Dublin, William King. The subject under discussion concerned a ‘piece of ground...containing three acres and a half’ that the trustees believed would make a ‘very fit and convenient piece’ to build a hospital for ‘the reception of persons labouring under curable distempers.’ The site was quickly approved by the charity’s patron, Grizelda Steevens, who subsequently commenced the building of Dr Steevens’ Hospital in 1719 and named it in honour of her deceased twin brother, Dr Richard Steevens. Despite the social purpose of Steevens’ Hospital being credited to Dr Steevens throughout historical scholarship, it was in fact the actions of Grizelda, who established the first hospital for the poor in Dublin. This chapter acknowledges the significance of Grizelda’s patronage of Steevens’ Hospital and her instrumental roles in its building process, which was described in the 1734 edition of the Dublin Journal as ‘so pious a Design.’

As an elite and unmarried Anglo-Irishwoman who was widely recognized by her contemporaries for her ‘charitable virtues’, Steevens’ wealth, social capital, and gendered status in Irish society provided her with unique influence and agency in traditionally masculine spheres; as she oversaw the construction and finances of the hospital between 1719-1734, managed the project’s board of male trustees and was continually active with the institutions’ maintenance until her death at the age of ninety-three in 1746. By reconsidering Grizelda’s intimate involvement with the development of Steevens’ Hospital, in addition to the ways in which her architectural legacy was visually and materially defined through portraiture and patronage, provides new and nuanced perspectives into elite women’s experiences as ‘improvers’, designers and builders of urban and charitable spaces in eighteenth-century Ireland.

Danielle Willkens “Paper Patrons: Women of the Transatlantic Design Network.”

When knowledge is acquired and formed through personal connections, it is often referred to as actor-network theory. In popular culture, it is known as ‘six degrees of separation,’ and scholarly analysis typically deploys it in 20th and 21st-century studies as an ‘anthropology of architecture.’ For design, these studies set forth people, objects, and flows as critically influential actors that may shape, and are not simply affected by, the form and meaning of architecture. By placing individuals and groups in an active position within the creation of the built environment, this paper will illuminate the contributions of three women within the ‘Transatlantic Design Network,’ a shared and fluid network that largely transcended nationalistic concerns in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Many names will be familiar to readers; yet the women of the Transatlantic Design Network have yet to receive their due since, historically, these women have only been seen through the eyes of and through their associations with men famous. These women served as indispensable points of contact for their compatriots abroad and integral to epistolary exchange on art and architecture. Additionally, they were benevolent hosts for women from other international circles. As a patron and advocate for the arts who recognized her role as an invaluable architectural emissary—introducing designers to specific sites, figures, and emergent architectural ideas and discoveries—Maria Cosway was the most prominent female ambassador in the network and she was joined by others, such as Angelica Schuyler Church (1756–1814) and Eliza Crawford Anderson (1780–1839). Examining these three women in concert, alongside their shared interests and connections, will establish a new set of reflections and associations within the transatlantic world of architectural exchange in the era prior to the transatlantic cable, steamship crossings, and photography.